

The Bible Echo, vol. 13

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Ellet Joseph Waggoner

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1898

January 3, 1898

“Sacrifices” The Bible Echo 13, 1.

E. J. Waggoner

There is only one sacrifice in the Christian religion, and that was made by Christ. We have never made a sacrifice. God does not call us to make sacrifices, but to accept the sacrifice that has been made. True, we have to give up all things that pertain to self, but giving up self is simply taking Christ.*BEST January 3, 1898, par. 1*

Suppose a poor beggar comes to us, with ragged clothing, and a few coppers in his pocket, and we say to him, “Take off these rags, and we will give you a new suit; and give up the coppers, and we will fill your pockets with sovereigns.” Would he begin to mourn, or talk about the great sacrifice he was called upon to make in giving up his rags and the coppers he had in them?*BEST January 3, 1898, par. 2*

Of course we give up something, but what sacrifice is it, when we get ten thousand times as much, and infinitely more? God wants us to give up our miserable ways, and take his ways; our narrow, circumscribed thoughts, and take his thoughts; our poverty, and get his robes; our gross ignorance, and get his wisdom; our wickedness, and get his righteousness.*BEST January 3, 1898, par. 3*

E. J. WAGGONER.

January 10, 1898

“Asking and Receiving” The Bible Echo 13, 2.

E. J. Waggoner

“Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth.” *Matthew 8:7, 8*. If we seek, with this assurance, it is worth while to know what to seek, what it is that is worth the finding. The same One who gives the assurance that we shall find, tells us what to seek: “Seek ye the Lord while He may be found.” *Isaiah 55:6*. “Seek the Lord, and his strength; seek his face evermore.” *Psalms 105:4*. *BEST January 10, 1898, par. 1*

Here is something that is certainly worth finding. If we find the Lord, we find His strength. He is the Almighty, therefore whoever finds Him becomes “strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness.” *Colossians 1:11*. In His presence is fulness of joy. Not only so, but “in Him all things consist” (*Colossians 1:17*, R.V.), and therefore he who finds the Lord has with Him all things. *Romans 8:23*. *BEST January 10, 1898, par. 2*

But is the Lord, with all this treasure, hard to find? Nay, quite the contrary; “he that seeketh, findeth,” because He is not far from every one of us. *Acts 17:27*. More than this, He is seeking us: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” *Luke 19:10*. Since He is seeking us, what can possibly hinder us from finding him, if we also seek Him? Each seeking the other, we are sure to come together. *BEST January 10, 1898, par. 3*

The statement that the Lord came to seek the lost, points to the fact that man was once with Him, but wandered away. “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” *Isaiah 53:6*. When people sin, they imagine that God is angry with them, and that He has turned away from them. Not so; it is they who turn away and hide from Him, while He seeks them. Adam and Eve, after their sin, “hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.” *Genesis 3:8*. But the Lord

did not hide from them; on the contrary, He sought them, and when they responded to His call, they found each other.*BEST January 10, 1898, par. 4*

Therefore, since it is we who “hid as it were our faces from Him” (*Isaiah 53:3*), and He is all the time seeking us, it is evident that all we have to do to seek and find Him is to turn round and look up. How easy the way, and how blessed the result! Let each one, then make these words his own: “When thou saidst, Seek ye My face, my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek,” assured that the finding will be sure, speedy, and glorious.*BEST January 10, 1898, par. 5*

E. J. WAGGONER.

January 24, 1898

“A Practical talk about Sabbath-keeping” The Bible Echo 13, 4.

E. J. Waggoner

Let us first notice the objection that so many, especially poor people who labour for their daily bread, make to the keeping of the Sabbath, namely,-*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 1*

“I COULDN'T LIVE IF I KEPT THE SABBATH”

That the seventh day is the Sabbath, and that the Lord has given it to men to keep, is admitted, but against all this is the frightful thought, “I couldn't make a living and keep the seventh day; I should certainly lose my situation.”*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 2*

As to losing the situation, that is quite possible, and yet not so absolutely certain as many suppose. God would have His witnesses everywhere, and in every legitimate calling, and therefore He is able to give His faithful children favour with the people, if He sees that their witness can be of use in any place. People who begin to keep the Sabbath often lose their situations, often because they expect it, and plan for it. Some on becoming Christians seem to think it is necessary to leave unbelieving employers and get among those who have the same faith, forgetting that a light is needed only where there is darkness. The man who cannot live the truth when surrounded by darkness and unbelief, cannot live it anywhere. A candle that will not burn except in the stove, is good for nothing except to throw into the fire. Of course it is understood that the individual must be where God wishes him to be; but if a person accepts the truth while in service among unbelievers, he should take it as God's will that he is to stay there until God makes it plain to him that he should leave. “Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman.” *1 Corinthians 7:20-22. BEST January 24, 1898, par. 3*

The Lord gave Joseph and Daniel, and Nehemiah, and “they of

Cæsar's household" so much favour with worldly men that they kept important situations while faithfully living the truth of Christ. On the other hand, Abraham had to leave his father's house, and Moses lost one of the best situations that the world ever had to offer any man, and neither of them were ever sorry for it. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." *2 Chronicles 16:9*. He has always been able to take care of His people. "When they went from one nation to another, from one kingdom to another people, He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, He reproved kings for their sakes; saying, Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm." *Psalms 105:13-15*. The same God lives to-day. *BEST January 24, 1898, par. 4*

THE LABOURING MAN'S FRIEND

But, as a matter of fact, the Sabbath is the labouring man's friend. It comes to him, laden with God's richest blessings, and brings him perfect rest from all weariness and oppression. All the hopes and aims of Socialists of the best class, and of the most disinterested philanthropists, fall infinitely short of the blessed realities that the Sabbath of the Lord opens before those who accept it. The plans and efforts of the best of social reformers (outside, of course, of those who use Gospel methods only), have not materially if at all lessened the amount of poverty and suffering, but have resulted simply in arousing and augmenting discontent. The Sabbath of the Lord, on the other hand, makes known to men the power that will enable them patiently and contentedly to endure that which for a season must be borne, and gives them the certainty of the speedy removal of all ills. *BEST January 24, 1898, par. 5*

The Sabbath keeps ever before our minds the wondrous power manifested in creation, that power by which all who believe are saved from sin, and by which all men, whether they believe or not, are kept alive from day to day and from one moment to another. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being." *Acts 17:25*. "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness." *Lamentations 3:22, 23*. The Sabbath, which makes known God as Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer (*Ezekiel 20:12*),

teaches confidence in Him, for whoever becomes acquainted with God trusts Him. *Psalms 9:10*. Therefore the Sabbath takes from the poor man the heavy load of care and anxiety that he has borne so long, by introducing him to the Almighty Father, "in whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind." *Job 12:10*. It is only when a man does not know the Sabbath and its Lord, that he says, "I couldn't live if I served Him." The one who knows the Lord will rather say, "I cannot live without Him." *BEST January 24, 1898, par. 6*

Think a moment of the incongruity of the statement by a professed Christian, that he couldn't live if he kept the Sabbath of the Lord; that he wouldn't dare take the risk. But if he dare not trust the Lord for the life that now is, how dare he trust Him for the life to come? If the Lord cannot keep us alive for a few short years, what possible hope is there of eternal life? "Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *Matthew 6:32, 33. BEST January 24, 1898, par. 7*

SUNDAY THE SIGN OF JUSTIFICATION BY WORKS

We see that the Sabbath is the great and final test of faith in God, and is therefore the seal of righteousness; for "the just shall live by faith," and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." *Romans 1:17; 14:23*. It is the exact opposite of the Sunday, which is the badge of a system of religion that consists in justification by works. Let it be understood that it is not asserted that all those who observe the Sunday depend on works for justification. Far from it. The writer knows many by personal acquaintance, and is fully persuaded that there are many thousands more, who keep Sunday instead of the Sabbath, thinking it to be the Sabbath, and who nevertheless are loving disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, trusting in His merits alone for their salvation. We say "nevertheless," for their trust in the Lord Jesus is in spite of their observance of Sunday, having by no means any connection with it, except to be hindered by it; for if they could but see the Sabbath as it is in Jesus, they would find a "joy and peace in believing" such as they never had before. *BEST January 24, 1898, par. 8*

Now for the proof that the Sunday stands only for “another gospel” than that of the Lord Jesus, a gospel which consists in exalting the creature above the Creator. We have already seen that the Sabbath-God’s rest-is the assurance that God’s work is perfect and complete, and the acceptance of it in Spirit and in truth, is the ceasing of our own works and the resting in the finished work of God, who created all things by Jesus Christ. God worked, and then rested in the enjoyment of His perfect work; we, having wearied ourselves with our imperfect work, obey His call, and, leaving our works, rest in His.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 9*

“In six days the Lord made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” *Exodus 20:11*. A fact is a thing done, the fact remains for ever, since it can never cease to be a fact that it has been done. It is a fact that God rested on the seventh day, and that fact will remain throughout eternity. In order, therefore, for the Sabbath to be “changed,” from the seventh day to some other day it would have to cease to be a fact that God rested on the seventh day; but that is impossible; so it is impossible for the Sabbath to be changed,—as impossible as for it to cease to be a fact that God created the heavens and the earth in six days, and rested the seventh day.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 10*

It is possible that another than the seventh day *might* have been made the Sabbath day, if God had so ordered it. In that case, however, the week would not have consisted of seven days, as now. Thus: God doubtless could have created all things in five days, and rested the sixth, making a week of six days; or He might have finished the work in four days, and rested the fifth; or He could have completed the work of creation in three days, and rested the fourth; or in two days, resting the third; or, since there is no limit to the power of God, He might have completed the work of creation in one day, and rested the second, making the week consist of but two days, and giving man a Sabbath every second day. God *did not* do any of these things: we only say that He *might* have done so if it had seemed good to Him; but one thing He could not possibly have done, and that is, to have created all things in one day, and at the same time rest on that day from all His works. That is to say, the first day of the week is the one day of the week which could not by

any possibility be made the Sabbath of the Lord. But the first day of the week has been set apart by man as the Sabbath.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 11*

Thus, Dr. Isaac Williams, in "Plain Sermons on the Catechism" (Longmans, Green, & Co.), says:-*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 12*

The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the Church, has enjoined it.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 13*

"The Church," therefore, in attempting to make a Sabbath day which God could not use as the Sabbath, shows itself to be that power "who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." *2 Thessalonians 2:4*.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 14*

Scores of testimonials from doctors of divinity and learned men who themselves observe and teach others to observe Sunday, might be cited to show that the observance of Sunday rests on no Divine authority whatever, but is only an ordinance of men. The religion, therefore, of which it stands as the sign, and, as many of its advocates say, even the foundation, is a religion that rests on human works and human inventions, instead of the works and words of the Lord. To make Sunday the Sabbath, the facts and record of creation, must be ignored, and with these go the basis of the Gospel, since redemption is creation. Therefore we repeat that while the Sabbath of the Lord teaches redemption through trust in *the finished work* of God in Christ, the Sunday teaches redemption through man's own imperfect work.*BEST January 24, 1898, par. 15*

In so saying, we refer to the institution, and not to any man. As before stated, there are thousands of men and women who are strict observers of Sunday, supposing it to be the Sabbath, who are nevertheless depending on Christ for salvation, so far as they know Him. May God grant that they may soon see Him, as the Alpha, and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, the One in whom all things were created, and in whom all things consist, who redeems by no other word than that by which He in the beginning made the worlds. Reader, which will you choose; your

own incomplete and imperfect works and unrest, or God's complete and perfect work and His everlasting rest? He calls, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." Now is the time to choose; "to-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." *BEST January 24, 1898, par. 16*

E. J. WAGGONER.

February 7, 1898

“The Hour of His Coming” *The Bible Echo* 13, 6.

E. J. Waggoner

The Lord gives the evidence in the word by which we may know when His coming is near at hand, even at the door. We may see these evidences even now, and the message to the world is a message of preparation for the coming of the Lord. *BEST February 7, 1898, par. 1*

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man.” *Matthew 14:36*. Yet some men are continually guessing and speculating and making calculations about periods and cycles in the effort to fix the date for the Lord’s coming. *BEST February 7, 1898, par. 2*

Now, this much we know, “The Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” *Luke 12:40*. When men, therefore, have made their last guess, we may know that at that hour at least the Lord will not come. His coming will take all unawares who are not following His instructions. The knowledge of the exact time of His coming would not prepare a soul for that day. “Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when He will return from the wedding; that when He cometh and knocketh, they may open unto Him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching.” *Luke 12:35-37. BEST February 7, 1898, par. 3*

E. J. WAGGONER.

March 14, 1898

“The Righteousness of God” The Bible Echo 13, 11.

E. J. Waggoner

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” *Matthew 6:33.BEST March 14, 1898, par. 1*

The righteousness of God, says Jesus, is the one thing to be sought in this life. Food and clothing are minor in comparison with it. God will supply them, as a matter of course, so that anxious care and worriment need not be depended on them; but to secure God's kingdom and His righteousness should be the only object of life.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 2*

In *1 Corinthians 1:30* we are told that Christ is made unto us righteousness as well as wisdom; and since Christ is the wisdom of God, and in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, it is evident that the righteousness which life is made to us is the righteousness of God. let us see what this righteousness is.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 3*

In *Psalms 119:172* the Psalmist thus addresses the Lord: “My tongue shall speak of Thy Word; for all Thy commandments are righteousness.” The commandments are righteousness, not simply in the abstract, but they are the righteousness of God. For proof read the following:-*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 4*

“Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but My salvation shall be for ever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished. Harken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.” *Isaiah 51:6, 7.BEST March 14, 1898, par. 5*

What do we learn from this? That they who know the righteousness

of God are those in whose heart is His law, and therefore that the law of God is the righteousness of God.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 6*

This may be proved again, as follows: "All unrighteousness is sin." 1 *John 5:17*. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 *John 3:4*. Sin is the transgression of the law, and it is also unrighteousness; therefore sin and unrighteousness are identical. But if unrighteousness is transgression of the law, righteousness must be obedience to the law. Or, to put the proposition into mathematical form:-*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 7*

Unrighteousness-sin. *John 5:17*.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 8*

Transgression of the law-sin. 1 *John 3:4*.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 9*

Therefore, as two things that are equal to the same thing are equal to each other, we have:-*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 10*

Unrighteousness-transgression of the law, which is a negative equation. The same thing, stated in positive terms, would be:-*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 11*

Righteousness-obedience to the law.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 12*

Now what law is it obedience to which is righteousness and disobedience to which is sin? It is that law which says, "Thou shalt not covet;" for the Apostle Paul tells us that this law convinced him of sin. *Romans 7:7*. The law of ten commandments, then, is the measure of the righteousness of God. Since it is the law of God and is righteousness, it must be the righteousness of God. There is, indeed no other righteousness.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 13*

Since the law is the righteousness of God-a transcript of His character-it is easy to see that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole duty of man. *Ecclesiastes 12:13*. Let no one think that his duty will be circumscribed if confined to the ten commandments, for they are "exceeding broad." "The law is spiritual," and comprehends a great deal more than can be

discerned by an ordinary reader. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." *1 Corinthians 2:14*. The exceeding breadth of the law of God can be realised only by those who prayerfully meditate upon it. A few texts of Scripture will suffice to show us something of its breadth.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 14*

In the sermon on the mount Christ said: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." *Matthew 5:21, 22*. And again: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." *Verses 27, 28. BEST March 14, 1898, par. 15*

This does not mean that the commandments, "Thou shalt not kill," and, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," are imperfect, or that God now requires a greater degree of morality from Christians than He did from His people who were called Jews. He requires the same from all men in all ages. The Saviour simply explained these commandments, and showed their spirituality. To the unspoken charge of the Pharisees, that He was ignoring and undermining the moral law, He replied by saying that He came for the purpose of establishing the law, and that it could not be abolished, and then He expounded the true meaning of the law in a way that convicted them of ignoring and disobeying it. He showed that even a look or a thought may be a violation of the law, and that it is indeed a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 16*

In this Christ did not reveal a new truth, but only brought to light and unfolded an old one. The law meant just as much when He proclaimed it from Sinai as when He expounded it on the mountain in Judea. When, in tones that shook the earth, He said, "Thou shalt

not kill," He meant, "Thou shalt not cherish anger in the heart, thou shalt not indulge in envy, nor strife, nor anything which is in the remotest degree akin to murder." All this and much more is contained in the words, "Thou shalt not kill." And this was taught by the inspired words of the Old Testament; for Solomon showed that the law deals with things unseen as well as things seen, when he wrote:-*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 17*

"Let us heart the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." *Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. BEST March 14, 1898, par. 18*

The argument is this: The judgment passes upon every secret thing; the law of God is the standard in the judgment,—it determines the quality of every act, whether good or evil; therefore the law of God forbids evil in thought as well as in deed. So the conclusion of the whole matter is that the commandments of God contain the whole duty of man, and are therefore the true standard of righteousness.*BEST March 14, 1898, par. 19*

E. J. WAGGONER.

March 21, 1898

“Righteousness and How Obtained” The Bible Echo 13, 12.

E. J. Waggoner

“The doers of the law,” says Paul, “shall be justified.” To *justify* means to *make righteous*, or to show one to be righteous. It is evident that perfect obedience to a perfectly righteous law would constitute one a righteous person. It was God’s design that such obedience should be rendered to the law by all His creatures; and in this way the law was ordained unto life. *Romans 7:10.BEST March 21, 1898, par. 1*

But for one to be judged “a doer of the law” it would be necessary that he had kept the law in its fullest measure every moment of his life. If he had come short of this, he could not be said to have done the law. It is a sad fact that there are in all the human race no doers of the law, for both Jews and Gentiles are “all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no not one; there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unpardonable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.” *Romans 3:9-12*. The law speaks to all who are within its sphere; and in all the world there is not one who can open his mouth to clear himself from the charge of sin which it brings against him. Every mouth is stopped, and all the world stand guilty before God. *Verse 19*. “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” *Verse 23.BEST March 21, 1898, par. 2*

THE LAW CANNOT JUSTIFY THE SINNER

Therefore, although “the doers of the law shall be justified,” it is evident that “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” *Verse 20*. The law, being “holy, and just, and good,” cannot justify a sinner. In other words, a just law cannot declare that the one who violates it is innocent. A law that would justify a wicked man would be a wicked law. The law should not be reviled because it cannot justify sinners. On the contrary, it should be extolled on that account. The fact that

the law will not declare sinners to be righteous,—that it will not say that men have kept it when they have violated it, is in itself sufficient evidence that it is good. Men applaud an incorruptible earthly judge, one who cannot be bribed, and who will not declare a guilty man innocent. Surely, they ought to magnify the law of God, which will not bear false witness. It is the perfection of righteousness, and therefore it is forced to declare the sad fact that not one of Adam's race has fulfilled its requirements.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 3*

Moreover, the fact that to do the law is simply man's duty shows that when he has come short in a single particular he can never make it up. The requirements of each precept of the law are so broad,—the whole law is so spiritual,—that an angel could render no more than simple obedience. Yea, more, the law is the righteousness of God,—a transcript of His character,—and since His character cannot be different from what it is, it follows that even God Himself cannot be better than the measure of goodness demanded by His law. He cannot be better than He is and the law declares what He is. What hope, then, that one who has failed, in even one precept, can add enough extra goodness to make up the full measure? He who attempts to do that sets before himself the impossible task of being better than God requires, yea, even better than God Himself.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 4*

MAN'S INABILITY TO DO RIGHT

But it is not simply in one particular that men have failed. They have come short in every particular. It is impossible for fallen man, with his weakened power, to do even a single act that is up to the perfect standard. This proposition needs no further proof than a restatement of the fact that the law is the measure of God's righteousness. Surely there are none so presumptuous as to claim that any act of their lives has been or could be as good as if done by the Lord Himself. Everyone must say with the psalmist, "My goodness extendeth not to Thee." *Psalms 16:2. BEST March 21, 1898, par. 5*

Christ, who "needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man" (*John 2:25*), said: "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornication,

murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; all these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” *Mark 7:21-23*. In other words, it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right and the things which a person naturally does are evil. Evil dwells within, and is a part of the being. Therefore the apostle says: “The carnal [fleshly, natural] mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” *Romans 8:7, 8*. And again: “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” *Galatians 5:17*. Since evil is a part of man’s very nature, being inherited by each individual from a long line of sinful ancestors, it is very evident that whatever righteousness springs from him must be only like “filthy rags” (*Isaiah 64:6*) compared with the spotless robe of the righteousness of God.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 6*

The impossibility of good deeds proceeding from a sinful heart is thus forcibly illustrated by the Saviour: “For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.” *Luke 6:44, 45*. That is to say-*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 7*

A MAN CANNOT DO GOOD UNTIL HE FIRST BECOMES GOOD

Therefore, deeds done by a sinful person have no effect whatever to make him righteous, but, on the contrary, coming from an evil heart, they are evil, and so add to the sum of his sinfulness. Only evil can come from an evil heart, and multiplied evil cannot make one good deed; therefore it is useless for an evil person to think to become righteous by his own efforts. He must first be made righteous before he can do the good that is required of him, and which he wants to do.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 8*

The case, then, stands thus: 1. The law of God is perfect righteousness; and perfect conformity to it is demanded of everyone

who shall enter the kingdom of heaven. 2. But the law has not a particle of righteousness to bestow upon any man, for all are sinners, and are unable to comply with its requirements. No matter how diligently nor how zealously a man works, nothing that he can do will meet the full measure of the law's demands. It is too high for him to attain to; he cannot obtain righteousness by the law. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified [made righteous] in His sight." What a deplorable condition! We must have the righteousness of the law or we cannot enter heaven, and yet the law has no righteousness for one of us. It will not yield to our most persistent and energetic efforts the smallest portion of that holiness without which no man can see the Lord.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 9*

WHO THEN, CAN BE SAVED

Can there, then, be such a thing as a righteous person?—Yes, for the Bible often speaks of them. It speaks of Lot as "that righteous man;" it says, "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings" (*Isaiah 3:10*), thus indicating that there will be righteous persons to receive the reward; and it plainly declares that there will be a righteous nation at the last, saying: "In that day shall this song be sung in the lewd of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." *Isaiah 26:1, 2*. David says, "Thy law is the truth." *Psalms 119:142*. It is not only truth, but it is the sum of all truth; consequently the nation that keeps the truth will be a nation that keeps the law of God. Such will be doers of His will, and they shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. *Matthew 7:21.BEST March 21, 1898, par. 10*

HOW RIGHTEOUSNESS IS OBTAINED

The question, then, is, How may the righteousness that is necessary in order that one may enter that city, be obtained? To answer this question is the great work of the gospel. Let us first have an object lesson on justification, or the imparting of righteousness. The fact may help us to a better understanding of

the theory. The example is given in *Luke 18:9-14*, in these words:-*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 11*

“And he spake this parable onto certain which trusted is themselves that they were righteous, and despised others. Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 12*

This was given to show how we may not, and how we may, attain to righteousness. The Pharisees are not extinct; there are many in these days who expect to gain righteousness by their own good deeds. They trust in themselves that they are righteous. They do not always so openly boast of their goodness; but they show in other ways that they are trusting to their own righteousness.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 13*

But what is the result?—The man who trusted in his own righteousness had none, while the man who prayed, in heart-felt contrition, “God be merciful to me, a sinner,” went down to his house a righteous man. Christ says that he went justified, that is, made righteous.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 14*

Notice that the publican did something more than bewail his sinfulness; he asked for mercy. What is mercy?—It is unmerited favour. It is the disposition to treat a man better than he deserves. And this is God’s disposition towards repentant sinners. “As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed out transgressions from us.” *Psalms 103:11, 12*. “If we confess our sins. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” *1 John 1:9*.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 15*

A FREE GIFT

Let us now read the direct Scripture statement of how righteousness is bestowed. The apostle, having proved that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, so that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in His sight proceeds to say that we are “justified [made righteous] freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” “Being made righteous freely.” How else could it be? Since the best efforts of a sinful man have not the least effect toward producing righteousness, it is evident that the only way it can come to him is as a gift. That righteousness is a gift is plainly stated by Paul in *Romans 5:17*: “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ.” It is because righteousness is a gift that eternal life which is the reward of righteousness is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 16*

RECEIVED BY FAITH

“But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.” God puts His righteousness upon the believer. He covers him with it so that his sin no more appears. Then the forgiven one can exclaim with the prophet:-*BEST March 21, 1898, par. 17*

“I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” *Isaiah 61:10.BEST March 21, 1898, par. 18*

RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT THE LAW

But what about “the righteousness of God without the law?” How does that accord with the statement that the law is the righteousness of God, and that outside of its requirements there is

not righteousness? There is no contradiction here. The law is not ignored by this process. Note carefully: Who gave the law?—Christ. How did He speak it?—“As one having authority,” even as God. The law sprang from Him the same as from the Father, and is simply a declaration of the righteousness of His character. Therefore the righteousness which comes by the faith of Jesus Christ is the same righteousness that is epitomised in the law; and this is further proved by the fact that it is “witnessed by the law.” *BEST March 21, 1898, par. 19*

Let the reader try to picture the scene. Here stands the law as the swift witness against the sinner. It cannot change, and it will not call a sinner a righteous man. The convicted sinner tries again and again to obtain righteousness from the law, but it resists all his advances. It cannot be bribed by any amount of penance or professedly good deeds. But here stands Christ, “full of grace” as well as of truth, calling the sinner to Him. At last the sinner, weary of the vain struggle to get righteousness from the law, listens to the voice of Christ, and flees to His outstretched arms. Hiding in Christ, he is clothed with His righteousness; and now behold! he has obtained, through faith in Christ, that for which he has been vainly striving. He has the righteousness which the law requires, and it is the genuine article, because he obtained it from the Source of Righteousness,—from the very place at whence the law came. And the law witnesses to the genuineness of this righteousness. It says that so long as the man retains that, it will go into court and defend him against all accusers. It will witness to the fact that he is a righteous man. *BEST March 21, 1898, par. 20*

E. J. WAGGONER.

April 11, 1898

“Acceptance with God” The Bible Echo 13, 15.

E. J. Waggoner

Many people hesitate to make a start to serve the Lord, because they fear that God will not accept them; and thousands who have been professed followers of Christ for years are still doubting their acceptance with God. For the benefit of such I write; and I would not bewilder their minds with speculations, but will endeavor to give them the simple assurances of God's word.*BEST April 11, 1898, par. 1*

“Will the Lord receive me?” I reply by another question, Will a man receive that which he has bought? If you go to the shop and make a purchase, will you receive the goods when they are delivered? Of course you will; there is no room for any question about it. The fact that you bought the goods, and paid your money for them, is sufficient proof, not only that you are *willing*, but you are *anxious*, to receive them. If you did not want them, you would not have bought them. Moreover, the more you paid for them, the more anxious you are to receive them. If the price that you paid was great, and you had almost given your life to earn it, then there can be no question but that you will accept the purchase when it is delivered. Your great anxiety is lest there should be some failure to deliver it.*BEST April 11, 1898, par. 2*

Now, let us apply this simple, natural illustration to the case of the sinner coming to Christ. In the first place, he has bought us. “What? Know ye not that *your* body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price.” *1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.**BEST April 11, 1898, par. 3*

The price that was paid for us was His own blood-His life. Paul said to the elders of Ephesus, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.” *Acts 20:28.* “Forasmuch as ye know that ye

were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation [manner of life] received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." *1 Peter 1:18, 19*. He "gave Himself for us." *Titus 2:14*. He "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." *Galatians 1:4*. *BEST April 11, 1898, par. 4*

He bought not a certain class, but the whole world of sinners. "For God so loved *the world*, that He gave His only-begotten Son." *John 3:16*. Jesus said, "The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." *John 6:51*. "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *Romans 5:6, 8*. *BEST April 11, 1898, par. 5*

The price paid was infinite, therefore we know that He very much desired that which He bought. He had His heart set on obtaining it. He could not be satisfied without it. See *Philippians 2:6-8*; *Hebrews 12:2*; *Isaiah 53:11*. *BEST April 11, 1898, par. 6*

"But I am not worthy." That means that you are not worth the price paid, and therefore you fear to come lest Christ will repudiate the purchase. Now, you might have some fear on that score if the bargain were not sealed, and the price already paid. If He should refuse to accept you, on the ground that you are not worth the price, He would not only lose you, but also the amount paid. Even though the goods for which you have paid are not worth what you gave for them, you yourself would not be so foolish as to throw them away. You would rather get some return for your money than get nothing. *BEST April 11, 1898, par. 7*

But, further, you have nothing to do with the question of worth. When Christ was on earth in the interest of the purchase, He "needed not that any should testify of man; for He knew what was in man." *John 2:25*. He made the purchase with His eyes open, and He knew the exact value of that which He bought. He is not at all disappointed when you come to Him and He finds that you are worthless. You have not to worry over the question of worth; if He, with His perfect knowledge of the case, was satisfied to make the

bargain, you should be the last one to complain.*BEST April 11, 1898, par. 8*

For, most wonderful truth of all, he bought you for the very reason that you were not worthy. His practiced eye saw in you great possibilities; and He bought you, not for what you were then or are now worth, but for what He could make of you. He says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake." *Isaiah 43:25*. We have no righteousness; therefore He bought us, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Says Paul, "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power." *Colossians 2:9, 10*. Here is the whole process:-*BEST April 11, 1898, par. 9*

"We all...were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace, in His kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." *Ephesians 2:3-10*.*BEST April 11, 1898, par. 10*

We are to be "to the praise of the glory of His grace." This we could not be if we were originally worth all He paid for us. There would in that case be no glory to Him in the transaction. He could not in the ages to come show in us the riches of His grace. But when He takes us, worth nothing, and at the last presents us faultless before the throne, it will be to His everlasting glory. And then there will not be any to ascribe worthiness to themselves. Throughout eternity the sanctified hosts will unite in saying to Christ: "Thou art worthy; ...for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and

honour, and glory, and blessing.” *Revelation 5:9, 10, 12.**BEST April 11, 1898, par. 11*

E. J. WAGGONER.

April 18, 1898

“Bond-servants and Freemen” The Bible Echo 13, 16.

E. J. Waggoner

The power of faith in bringing victory may be shown by many lines of Scripture texts, which are exceedingly practical.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 1*

In the first place, let it be understood that the sinner is a slave. Christ said. “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.” *John 8:34*. Paul also says, putting himself in the place of an unrenewed man, “For we know that law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin.” *Romans 7:14*. A man who is sold is a slave; therefore the man who is sold under sin is the slave of sin. Peter brings to view the same fact, when, speaking of corrupt, false teachers, he says, “While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.” *2 Peter 2:19*.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 2*

The prominent characteristic of the slave is that he cannot do as he pleases, but is bound to perform the will of another, no matter how irksome it may be. Paul thus proves the truth of his saying,—that he, as a carnal man, was the slave of sin: “For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.” “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.” *Romans 7:15, 17-19*.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 3*

The fact that sin controls proves that a man is a slave; and, although every one that committeth sin is the bond-servant of sin, the slavery becomes unendurable when the sinner has had a glimpse of freedom, and longs for it, yet cannot break the chains which bind him to sin. The impossibility for the unrenewed man to do even the good that he would like to do may be seen from *Romans 8:7, 8* and *Galatians 5:17*.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 4*

How many people have in their own experience proved the truth of these scriptures! How many have resolved, and resolved again; and yet their sincerest resolutions have proved in the face of temptation as weak as water! They had no might, and they did not know what to do; and, unfortunately, their eyes were not upon trod so much as upon themselves and the enemy. Their experience was one of constant struggle against sin, it is true; but of constant defeat as well.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 5*

Call you this a true Christian experience? There are some who imagine that it is. Why, then, did the apostle, in the anguish of his soul, cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" *Romans 7:24*. Is a true Christian experiencing a body of death so terrible that time soul is constrained to cry for deliverance? Nay, verily!*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 6*

Again, who is it that, in answer to this earnest appeal, reveals Himself as a deliverer? Says the apostle, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." In another place he says of Christ:*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 7*

"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." *Hebrews 2:14, 15*.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 8*

Again, Christ thus proclaims His own mission:*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 9*

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me: because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." *Isaiah 61:1*.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 10*

What this bondage and captivity are has already been shown. It is the bondage of sin-the slavery of being compelled to sin, even against the will, by the power of inherited and acquired evil propensities and habits. Does Christ deliver from a true Christian

experience? No, indeed! Then the bondage of sin, of which the apostle complains in the seventh of Romans, is not the experience of a child of God, but of the servant of sin. It is to deliver men from this captivity that Christ came; not to deliver us, during this life, from warfare and struggles, but from defeat; to enable us to be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, so that we could give thanks unto the Father “who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son,” through whose blood we have redemption.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 11*

How is this deliverance effected? By the Son of God. Says Christ, “If ye continue in My word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 12*

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” *John 8:31, 32, 36*. This freedom comes to every one that believeth; for to them that believe on His name, He gives the “power to become the sons of God.” The freedom from condemnation comes to them who are in Christ Jesus (*Romans 8:1*); and we put on Christ by faith (*Galatians 3:26, 27*). It is by faith that Christ dwells in our hearts.*BEST April 18, 1898, par. 13*

E. J. WAGGONER.

June 13, 1898

“Judaism and Christianity” *The Bible Echo* 13, 24.

E. J. Waggoner

Many people speak familiarly about “Judaism,” who have very faint ideas of what it is. When they hear of some who keep the Sabbath according to the fourth commandment, they speak of them as “Judaizing,” because they think that Judaism means the religion enjoined in the Old Testament. But that is a great mistake.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 1*

Judaism means the religion of the Jews, but neither in the days of Christ and the apostles, nor since that time, have the Jews understood and believed the teaching of the Old Testament. If they had, they would have been Christians; for the religion of the Old Testament is Christianity.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 2*

Jesus said to the unbelieving Jews: “Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me; for he wrote of Me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe My words?” *John 5:46, 47*. From these words we learn that the Jews did not believe the writings of Moses. Therefore it is evident that the religion of the Jews-Judaism-was not and is not the religion taught by Moses. The religion taught by Moses was that which he received directly from the Lord, and it set forth Christ and Him only.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 3*

The apostle Paul says that in his earlier days he made great progress in “the Jews religion,” “being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions” of the fathers. *Galatians 1:13, 14*. The Jews’ religion, therefore, or Judaism, consisted in following tradition. But this was directly opposed to Old Testament teaching, for Jesus told them that by their traditions they made void the commandments of God (*Matthew 15:3*), and said of them, “In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” *Verse 9*. Here again we see that Judaism is the rejection of the Old Testament, instead of the acceptance of it. No man, therefore, who faithfully follows the religion of the Old Testament, can be called a Judaizer. On the contrary he is a Christian.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 4*

Again, the apostle Paul tells us that a veil was upon the hearts of the Jews, even in the days of Moses, so that they could not understand what Moses delivered to them. See *2 Corinthians 3:13-16*. He says, "Even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." But he adds that when the heart turns to the Lord the veil is taken away. This shows still further that the religion of the Old Testament is Christianity, and that the Jews who reject Christ, do so solely because they do not really believe the writings of Moses.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 5*

What, then, is Judaism?—It is the rejection of the gospel, as set forth in the Old Testament, and a following of tradition. When, therefore, we find people who know that the fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day of the week, commonly called Saturday, and who keep Sunday instead of that day, although they know that the Scriptures nowhere sanction it, neither in the Old Testament nor the New, but that Sunday observance stands wholly on tradition and custom, we may know that they *are following the essential principles of Judaism*, which consists in substituting tradition for the commandments of God. They may differ from the Jews in regard to the tradition which they follow, but they are one with them in principle.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 6*

Further, we have read the words of Jesus to the Jews, telling them that they could not believe Him, because they did not believe Moses. The reason is that Moses wrote of Christ. It is evident, therefore that they do not see Christ in the Old Testament, even in the writings of Moses, do not understand and believe the Old Testament. But they who do not believe the Old Testament, including the writings of Moses, do not really believe in Christ. Therefore they who reject the Old Testament writings, do really also reject the New Testament. They are in precisely the same condition as the Jews, for both fail to see Christ in the Old Testament.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 7*

Every word of God is pure and true, and has life. A person, therefore, who knows only a very small portion of the Bible, may know and believe in Christ. But it is impossible for any to be real believers in Christ, when they reject any portion of the word which He has spoken, and which testifies of Him. And it was his Spirit that

testified in all the writers of the Old Testament. *1 Peter 1:10*,
11.BEST June 13, 1898, par. 8

Let no one fear that by keeping the commandments of God, as set forth in the Old Testament, he will be a Judaiser. He can not keep those commandment except by faith in Christ. They are in Christ and Christ is in them. The keeping of the commandments of God, by the faith that appropriates the life of Christ, is true Christianity. He kept the commandments (*John 15:10*), and He is the same today that He was when on earth in the flesh. *Hebrews 13:8*. All that He did on earth was in order "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." *Romans 8:4*. It is by His obedience that we are made righteous. *Romans 5:19*. "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked." *1 John 2:6*.*BEST June 13, 1898, par. 9*

E. J. WAGGONER.

